

SENATE BILL 2153
By Herron

AN ACT to name the bridge spanning the Buffalo River on U.S. Highway 412 (S.R 100) in honor of the late Donnie Harold Qualls.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges in honor of those exemplary public servants who contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, no Tennessean is more deserving of this honor than the late Donnie Harold Qualls of Perry County; and

WHEREAS, born June 19, 1931, Donnie Harold Qualls graduated from Linden High School and attended Freed-Hardeman College; and

WHEREAS, he was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War in 1951 and subsequently attended boot camp training at Fort Knox; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Qualls valiantly served his country as a member of Company C, 13th Armed Infantry Battalion, CCA 3rd Armored Division in the Korean War and was promoted to Sgt. Tank Commander before ending his tour of duty; and

WHEREAS, upon his discharge from the Army, Donnie Qualls attended Middle Tennessee University on the G.I. Bill, earning a degree in Education; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Qualls returned home to Perry County after graduation and taught public high school for twelve to fourteen years, serving the rural Perry County schools as both teacher and principal; and

WHEREAS, eager to try his hand at a new career, Donnie Qualls began work for First State Bank as an Assistant Cashier while he attended the Banking School of the South in Louisiana; his exemplary career with First State Bank spanned approximately twenty years; and

WHEREAS, at the end of his illustrious tenure with the banking industry, Mr. Qualls returned to the teaching profession, serving as a Guidance Counselor for the Perry County School System, after having pursued additional college coursework to receive his endorsement as counselor at Middle Tennessee State University, until the spring of 1982; and

WHEREAS, realizing that citizenship entails many responsibilities as well as privileges, Mr. Qualls eagerly embraced the challenges of civic duty when he was elected Perry County Executive in 1982, in which position he served with purpose and conviction until his retirement in 1989; and

WHEREAS, during his term as County Executive, Donnie Harold Qualls accomplished many objectives for Perry County, including recruiting industries such as Angelica Manufacturing, obtaining funds to build a new factory building for Robinson Manufacturing, and building a new Perry County Public Library; and

WHEREAS, County Executive Donnie Qualls further served his constituents by successfully lobbying for funds to construct several bridges for Perry County and obtaining a portion of the Jessie Gray Tate farm for the construction of Perry County's National Guard Armory; and

WHEREAS, throughout all his endeavors, Donnie Qualls was a person of impeccable morals and irreproachable integrity, who worked assiduously to establish a brighter future for the good people of Perry County; and

WHEREAS, he served his fellow citizens faithfully in numerous other capacities and was an active member of the Masonic Lodge, which he served as Secretary, the Lions Club, and the Perry County Retired Teachers organization; and

WHEREAS, as a testament to Mr. Qualls's bountiful life of purpose and commitment and his long and distinguished record of community service, several prominent citizens have petitioned this body to name the bridge spanning the Buffalo River on Highway 412 (S.R. 100) in Perry County in honor of the late Donnie Harold Qualls; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly most heartily concurs with this excellent proposal; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the new bridge presently being constructed to span the Buffalo River on U.S Highway 412 (S.R. 100) in Perry County is hereby designated as the "Donnie Harold Qualls Memorial Bridge" in recognition of the years of public service that Mr. Qualls provided.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the bridge being constructed to span the Buffalo River on U.S Highway 412 (S.R. 100) as the "Donnie Harold Qualls Memorial Bridge".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall become operative only if the cost of the manufacture and installation of such signs is paid to the department of transportation from non-state funds within one (1) year of the effective date of this act. Such payment shall be made prior to any expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to the person or entity paying for such signs within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, an amount equal to the difference in such costs shall be remitted to the department in non-state funds within thirty (30) days of the sponsoring person or entity receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.